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ABSTRACT

Typical negative reactions to the use of new technologies in teacher and counselor training are viewed briefly. Five training styles are discussed: (1) consultation; (2) audio recording; (3) one-way mirror viewing; (4) audio-video recording; and (5) coached clients and simulated experiences. The efficacy of each in meeting the behavioral objectives for which they are intended is considered. The author prefers the simulated method because: (1) the range of experiences can be broadened to include practically any facet of human behavior likely to be encountered in a counseling situation; and (2) the supervisor-trainee sessions will be more likely to focus on personal attitudes and values rather than merely on techniques of counseling. (TL)

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FIVE GENERATIONS OF SUPERVISION

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"Counselors must know how to communicate with the technological specialist, because technology will come to guidance. It must come. We need it. The important question is who will decide what it will do for people and to people. We must determine, in consultation with technologists, what programmatic applications technology will have in guidance. We must not let the technologists define our role."

--Robert I. Havens, Guest Editor for TECHNOLOGY IN GUIDANCE, the November special issue of the Personnel and Guidance Journal.

Five Generations of Supervision

In the movie 2001: A Space Odyssey, a fifth generation computer named Hal runs amuck, steals a space ship, and wreaks havoc on the crew. The message that technology can grow and grow to heights beyond man's control is not lost in education.

In point of fact, many educators lead the resistance to the use of technological advancements in the classroom. But is this resistance based on objective data? Or is the anti-technology stance merely the protective posture of the ageing institution reluctant to move off comfortable dead center?

The teacher-trainer and counselor-trainer hears the voice of caution in Dworkin's article, "Beware of False Gods" (1971). Caution does seem justified in an Orwellian age where the wrong computer tape fed into the right communications network can shut down radio stations all over the country (New York Times, Feb. 18, 1971). And when we hear of abuses of technology by unskilled teacher-craftsman, it is easy to condemn all new developments in the name of caution.

It seems highly possible that much of this condemnation is based on instinct and attitudes rather than objective data. Is "creeping technology" really a danger to humanism? Is Hal, the computer of the future, our adversary or ally?

These questions have little meaning unless they are answered in terms of meeting the behavioral objectives of the educator. During his vacation, the businessman may reject the taxi-airport-high-speed-plane mode of travel for a more leisurely automobile trip with his family. As his objectives vary so do the means of accomplishing them. Technology in education must be evaluated in terms of the desired outcomes.

Consider the following examples of supervisory styles in counselor-education at City University of New York. Each style is currently in use and several professors,like Hal, are using all five generations. Others prefer just one approach.

You may want to consider which of the following styles fit your own "teaching set" and the concurrent behavioral objectives.

First Generation: Consultation

The counselor-trainee sees clients in his own school, the intern starts a trial job, or the practice teacher must fill in for the ill critic teacher. Each experience or each series of experiences is followed by a consultation session with the supervisor. Each supervisor has his own style and outcome goals which will determine tone and direction for the consultation hour. Some supervisors emphasize techniques, others focus on feelings, all are dependent on the trainee to relate the experience.

Thus, a typical session might go as follows:

The counselor-trainee is doing field-work at a local after-school community house. The youngsters are Black and Puerto Rican. The trainee is attempting to help the youngsters become test-wise so that they can better compete in school tests and placement examinations. It's the trainee's second consultation.

Trainee: My God, Ed, this Thursday didn't come soon enough. Those kids are driving me out of my tree!

Supr: I can see you're upset. Why don't you tell me about it?

Trainee: Gladly -- I just don't know what to do. I had planned to sit around in a small group and discuss some of the reasons why tests might be important to each of them-you know-why they signed up for this training and all....
Do some counseling before we begin to go over the methods to use in beating tests. But it's sure not working out?

Supr: I see (nodding), but can you be more specific?

Trainee: Well-we just about get started and maybe one of the girls is telling about something that happened to her in school--you know--something serious like a teacher doesn't like her when James--usually James or maybe Pedro makes some double meaning remark--usually dealing with sex--you know how eighth graders are--and the whole group laughs. By the time we get to the material, a new group is waiting to use the room.

Supr: Let me be sure I understand. These kids all signed up to learn how to "beat tests."

Trainee: *Check.*

Supr: *You start each session with a "counseling session" which at least some of the group resists and by the time you get to the material that is the reason for their being there, there is no time left.*

Trainee: *Right, everytime somebody like James or Pedro, who have some sex hangups, begin to---*

Supr: *Now wait a minute. Did it ever occur to you that maybe these kids see you as being dishonest. I mean when they signed up to learn about tests, was counseling about personal problems mentioned?*

Trainee: *Well, no.*

Supr: *And did it ever occur to you to start off the sessions giving the youngsters the thing that they were expecting and not.....*

And so it goes. The supervisor has chosen to point out inconsistencies between expectations, goals and practices of the trainee. Note that the dialogue revolves about and is dependent on first, the perceptions and second, the recollections of the trainee. Wheelis (1958) reminds us that ".....what is left out may be more important than what is reported." We know little of the trainee's style, the dynamics between trainee and James and Pedro or between trainee and minority people in general.

Most trainee's learn what the supervisor expects (demands) and are able to give it to him in short time. One way to improve this condition is to tape record the sessions.

Second Generation: Audio Recording

Supervision revolving about audio tape recordings of helping sessions is probably the most popular style in existence. It allows non-laboratory field work as well as lab, is relatively simple to operate, and yields all the verbal interaction between helper and helpee. Again the style of the supervisor determines the course of supervision. Some play back the tape together with the trainee, others critique the tape on their own, and still other supervisors never listen

to the tape itself--but rather react to verbatim transcripts prepared by trainees as follows:

Co: *What would you like to talk about today? (SUPR: GOOD: YOU'RE ALLOWING THE CLIENT TO SET GOALS FOR THE SESSIONS.)*

Cl: *Well, things are better at home. My mother seems to understand my moods better but now I'm really worried about a friend. She is smoking more and more and seems to like it. What can you do with somebody who likes it. What can you do with somebody who likes to do something but is kind of afraid of it at the same time?*

Co: *(Tentatively) I don't think you're talking about a friend, are you? (SUPR: NO--YOU'RE STRICTLY PLAYING A HUNCH--NOT ENOUGH DATA TO MAKE THAT JUMP.)*

Cl: *Yes, I am. She's a good friend-- I don't get it??? Oh, you thought I meant myself--like the girl who has a friend that's pregnant. No. You're wrong there (laughs).*

Co: *Then you really are worried about a friend who is smoking too much? (SUPR: BRINGING HER BACK TO FOCUS--NOT BAD.)*

There are certainly variations to this "verbatim style" but all rely on the spoken behavior of counselor and client. The image of counselor and supervisor bent over tape recorder, ears to speakers, straining to catch the whispered comment and the frightened gasp, comes to my mind. The subtle glance, the nervous smile, the wringing of the hands, the quiet desperation is missed by the microphone. It is like reading the dialogue of a play without the stage direction. The words are all there but the accompanying music is missing. Third generation practica have added the music to the book.

Third Generation: One-Way Mirror Viewing

The development of the one-way mirror allowed the supervisor (or groups of trainees) to sit unnoticed and observe the work of the trainee. It enables the observer to see the subtle non-verbal behaviors so critical to the relationship between helper and the helpee. But the scope of the observations is dependent on the perceptual range of the viewer. No matter how fast a supervisor can take notes he must see through the "tunnel vision" of his own two eyes.

Consider the following dialog taken from a third generation supervisory hour.

Supr: *I've got some notes about your session that we can go over but first, how did you feel about it?*

Trainee: *You know--I was so wrapped up in what was going on and trying to listen that I probably missed a lot. I was a little nervous, too, knowing that you and the class were watching. But I thought it went pretty well. Mike seemed to warm up to me. I don't think he has ever talked about some of those feelings to a woman before.*

Supr: *I agree, you know, physically, he moved toward you almost just as he was moving toward you psychologically.*

Trainee: *(pause) Oh wow that's right, I remember. When we started the session, he was way over at the corner of the desk and he did move closer to me didn't he. I didn't notice that at all.*

Supr: *Yes, it was obvious to the rest of us.*

Trainee: *Do you remember when he started to groove with me? What was I saying? What did I do?*

Supr: *Well, let's see (thinking back). It was about..... half way...through the session...I think that's when you mentioned that your brother had had a similar experience...No...It was when....No...I'm not sure when it started. I think it was more of a total gestalt thing. He just likes you.*

Trainee: *Did you see anything else important?*

And so the supervisor goes on with his notebook, hoping that he is perceptive enough to pick up the critical elements, verbal and non-verbal, in the session so that when he relates it back to the trainee, it will have meaning and provide growth. The obvious method to increase the range of supervisor perception is to record the session for observation by trainee and others in the cold light after the heat of the counseling session.

Fourth Generation: Audio-Video Recording

Just as the armchair football fan depends on the instant replay to assure that he doesn't miss the big plays, videotape supervision seems to insure that the critical verbal and non-verbal behavior of client and counselor are captured for later dissection and analysis, by both supervisor and supervisee.

It approaches the dimension of "seeing oneself as others do" as no other supervisory procedure. In addition, it is instant replay, ready for viewing at the conclusion of the session.

Consider the following dialogue in the fourth generation supervisor's office.

Supr: *Let's watch the tape. There are several places I want to stop it but if you want to talk about any portion just go ahead.*

(starts tape)

Trainee: *(Immediately) Oh God, look at how I am sitting, I'm as tense as a banjo string. And my hair--oh God.*

Supr: *(Stops tape) How do you mean tense? Were you tense? How were you feeling? at the time?*

Trainee: *That's strange because I didn't know how tense I was until I see myself now. Maybe if I had known I could have....(trails off).*

Supr: *Let's watch some more. (turns on the tape.)*

Trainee: *(After some time.) Look at that. I never finish a sentence do I? Am I that way here with you? I know I'm that way some of the time but I didn't think in counseling.....*

Supr: *Like right now.*

Trainee: *Right now?....Oh, I didn't finish that last sentence, did I?*

The supervisor goes easily from trainee's behavior on the tape to here and now behavior in the supervision hour itself. It is an easy transition because the total behavior of the trainee is the focus of the session. Techniques, non-verbal and verbal actions, feelings, etc., all are the determinants for successful helping relationships and they are evident in fourth generation supervision.

But even with instant replay with all the intimacies of replaying and replaying behaviors of both trainee and client, the training of the counselor is not complete. Unless elaborate care is taken to match counseling groups with

trainees there is no assurance that the trainee has been "touched" by the experience. Trainees often end up with "verbal, nice, cooperative" clients. This probably does little but reinforce perceptions of "text-book-type" counseling sessions.

Consider the techniques of the fifth generation supervisor.

Fifth Generation: Coached Clients and Simulated Experience

The TV monitor comes to life. A young man appears on the screen - black, afro, militant, whiskers, angry. As he looks directly at you he spits the following words:

"You goddam honkey. You don't know me--I don't want to know you. Just stay out of my life. Just leave me alone! I'm sick of your meddling. Go back downtown and leave me alone!!

(Stops the video tape recorder, turns to the trainee)

Supr: How do you feel about that?

Trainee: I don't know--it's scary. How can I ever talk to him?

Supr: You said it was scary--you mean you are frightened by him?

Trainee: Well..no. I don't think so--more maybe apprehen.... oh shit--yes I'm frightened. Any time I see a group of black guys in my neighborhood, I wonder about them.

Supr: What do you mean--You wonder about them?

Trainee: You know what I mean. Why are they here? What are they up to? The other day I crossed the street to avoid passing a group of them. I know it's silly but I can't help it.

Supr: O.K. You know you are frightened. Suppose this young man you just saw on the screen were sent to see his counselor, you. What would you want to happen?

Trainee: Well, I guess I would want him to listen to me and understand that I really want to help him.

Supr: And what would you say and do to bring this about? Keep in mind, that you'd be frightened.

Trainee: I'm not sure....I guess I would try to tell him that I hear him even though I probably can never fully understand.

Supr: Let's try something. A similar client is waiting to see you in Rm 1420. See if you can deal with him right now and we'll talk, after.

Through coaching clients and video taping "staged incidents" the supervisor can control and manipulate the experiences of the trainee. The range of experiences can be broadened to include practically any facet of human behavior.

The shy retiring man can be matched with overbearing girl clients who have been instructed to bully him. The Don Juan types can be overmatched with equally seductive types. Using this style, the fifth generation supervisor is involved with helping trainees to deal with their "soft spots" with the hope that their repertoire of behaviors is expanded.

As the supervisor moves through the generations, the emphasis shifts from counseling techniques to personal involvement and reaction. The line between what the counselor says and who he is becomes blurred just as the software-hardware line is blurred in advanced computers. It becomes more and more likely that the supervisor-trainee meeting will focus on personal attitudes and values aroused by the stimulus (tape or client) rather than strictly techniques of counseling. This emphasis is not traditional (institutional).

There is a tendency to cling to institutional means of counselor supervision. There is a tendency for all institutional values to persist in the face of instrumental change. What is needed is a solid scientific look at the product. This look must begin from the foundation of behavioral objectives. Only then can technology be evaluated. Only then can one speak meaningfully about the issue of using fifth generation styles of supervision. If technological developments can move us into the high speed lane of education, we must quickly, sweep out the old institutional impediments to this progress.

In guidance and counseling, the hour is late. We have no time for evangelists for the institutions nor for charlatans of change. We need clear thinking, goal directed, activists for advancement of learning.

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